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PART

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TITLE: Political Affairs (External): Multilateral: Kuwait:  
Mediation over Yemen: U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia

File No. Bk 2/1

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DEPT.	NAME	DATE	DEPT.	NAME	DATE	DEPT.	DATE
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B1103116/20 (66)



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KUWAIT

5 March, 1967.

(10217/67)

Dear Frank,



I called on 2 March on Muhammad al Mansour Al Rumaih, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador, to take advantage of one of his relatively rare visits to his post. He confirmed that Kuwait mediation between King Feisal and President Nasser was a dead duck. Nasser's air raid on Najran, coupled with Kuwait's omission of any public or private expression of sympathy for the Saudis had finally killed it. The Saudis were now more than ever convinced that Sabah Al Ahmad was emotionally committed to Nasser's defiance of the West, of colonialism, and his opposition to Israel, however much he might dislike, or profess to dislike, some of the other manifestations of Nasser's philosophy. (I must say, whatever he may say to belie this, Sabah Al Ahmad gives me the same impression. He is emotionally attracted - rather as the Germans were to Hitler - to anyone who will abuse the West and tell him (Sabah) and the Arabs, for all the world to hear, what wonderful fellows they are).

BS 31 (with Mr Evers)

2. Now that mediation had failed, Rumaih continued, Feisal would lift his restraint from the Yemeni Royalists, and indeed from those Republicans that were against Nasser (reported separately in my telegram no. 73 of 4 March). He had been under great pressure to do so for some time, both from Yemenis and from his own people. He felt very secure at home and much more confident of his own chances of survival, and that of his regime, than Nasser could possibly feel of his. Nasser was bankrupt and his supporters, both at home and abroad, were defecting in increasing numbers. Nasser's bombing was a two-edged weapon that did Feisal as much good as harm. And in any case further raids would meet a hot reception.

3. Nasser would, Rumaih thought, try to take over Aden but it would prove a millstone round his neck, and only increase his difficulties. If, however, he succeeded - and Rumaih thought there was a 90% chance that he would fail - things would get very difficult in the Arabian Gulf. Nobody in the Gulf was for Nasser - their own situation would soon be much better than anything Nasser's socialism had to offer - but the Sultan was the weak link in the common defence against him. Even if the Sultan spent his oil money well (which Rumaih doubted ) he could not attract popular support. He kept himself too isolated, received nobody, and Arabs would not stand for that. Indeed, he had no popular support at all, either inside the country or among his neighbours. The Sultan was another Shakhbut - incapable of adjusting himself to his current situation.

4. Reverting to Kuwait, Rumaih said the Sabah were fully aware of the dangers but were unduly afraid of Nasser, and would do nothing to offend him. They needed, or thought they needed, too much from him.

LAST PAPER.

T.F. Brenchley, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Arabian Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W. 1.

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Having  
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Having once been threatened by Iraq they remained obsessed by the danger, even though Iraq was powerless at the moment. Syria's dispute with the I.P.C. had been engineered to break Arif and establish Naji Talib and his Nasserist supporters; but Saudi contacts in Iraq reported the public as 100% against Naji Talib with widespread criticism of his expressed support for Syria. (In view of Talib's recent efforts in Damascus, this judgment of him appears too harsh - but it is what Rumaih said). Arif was a good man and King Feisal had offered him every form of support he could, and was even prepared to support him financially if asked. But Arif was in a very difficult position, and had not yet felt able to ask for financial support from Feisal. Rumaih hoped that the I.P.C. would stand firm against the Syrians and not make concessions. If they did, they might well have in Iraq a Government that was even more hostile to them than the present one, and the Syrians and Nasserists would gain an enormous advantage. The Kuwaitis, even if they saw the situation in this light, would not dare to offend Nasser by supporting Arif.

5. All of this is straight Saudi stuff that must be well known to Morgan Man and to the other recipients of this letter. I report it only because Rumaih, who is a frequent visitor to Riyadh and appears to be in close contact with the King, may, just possibly, have told me something new.

6. I am sending copies of this letter to Man in Jeddah, Beaumont in Baghdad, Crawford in Bahrain, Adams in Amman, Wilton in Aden, Tesh in Cairo, and Dean in Washington.

*Yours ever,*

*Geoff Jackson.*

(G.N. Jackson)



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VV SAUDI OFFICIAL CALLS FOR TRANSFER OF ARAB LEAGUE FROM  
CAIRO

(RNS BEIRUT) KUWAIT: IN A PRESS STATEMENT THE SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTRY  
UNDER-SECRETARY UMAR AL-SAQQAF HAS CALLED FOR THE TRANSFER OF  
THE ARAB LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS FROM CAIRO TO ANOTHER +NEUTRAL  
COUNTRY+. AL-SAQQAF ADDED THAT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, CAIRO HAD  
SUSPENDED THE KUWAITI MEDIATION BETWEEN THE UAR AND SAUDI ARABIA  
REGARDING YEMEN. HE EXPRESSED DOUBT WHETHER SUCH MEDIATION  
WAS STILL POSSIBLE +IN VIEW OF THE EGYPTIAN POISON GAS RAIDS+  
XXXXXX ON YEMENI ROYALIST VILLAGES.

Ab

AL-SAQQAF MADE THIS STATEMENT TO THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE  
WEEKLY 'AL-SIYASAH' BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR SAUDI ARABIA ON  
26TH FEBRUARY. IT IS PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S ISSUE.

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 5 - 3 MAR 1967 B42/1
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=B43 KUWAIT READY TO CONTINUE YEMEN MEDIATION, ASSEMBLY TOLD

A PASSAGE IN THE AMIRATE SPEECH DELIVERED BY PREMIER JABIR AL-AHMAD AL-JABIR AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW KUWAITI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TODAY, AS BROADCAST BY KUWAIT RADIO, NOTED THAT THERE WAS CONTINUING DISPUTE BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE U.A.R. OVER THE YEMEN, DESPITE THE EFFORTS KUWAIT HAD MADE TO BRING THEIR VIEWS CLOSER ON THE PROPOSALS IT HAD SUBMITTED. BUT KUWAIT HAD NOT GIVEN UP AND WOULD NOT HESITATE TO CONTINUE ITS MEDIATION AS LONG AS THERE WAS SOMEONE TO LISTEN. THE CRISIS ONLY SERVED TO STRENGTHEN KUWAIT'S DETERMINATION.

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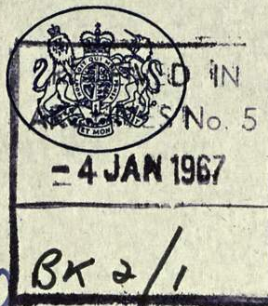
Room 257

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(10217/66)

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BRITISH EMBASSY,  
KUWAIT.

28 December, 1966.

*My dear Michael,*

In his letter 1025/14/12 of 14 December, Cranston reported that he had been told by the American Embassy that Kuwait was renewing her attempt at mediation between the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia over the Yemen.

2. As the Ambassador reported in his letter 10217/66 of 26 December to Brenchley (not copied to all the recipients of this letter), the Kuwait Foreign Minister, Shaikh Sabah al Ahmad, was in Cairo earlier this month for the meeting of the Arab Defence Council and was received by Nasser. According to the Kuwait Prime Minister, their discussion centred on the Yemen and Shaikh Sabah had concluded that the attitude of both parties was now so rigid that there was little prospect of any progress. Nevertheless, in a press statement on 24 December, Shaikh Sabah said; "In the course of the efforts made since last April up to today, most of the obstacles have been overcome and a basis has been laid for a solution of the issue. All points have been agreed, except one major point, which remains unresolved to this moment. Nevertheless, by perseverance and by doing the best we can, we shall find a path to the solution of this issue, and as long as the policy of the 'open door' prevails - as long as the dialogue is kept going - there is good hope that we shall reach the solution which we all seek."

3. All this suggests that the true position is that Kuwait, while holding herself ready to mediate if either party shows any signs of willingness to renew the talks, is not actively pushing any proposals for settlement at the present time. This position was confirmed to the Ambassador by the American Ambassador who said that he had been told by Shaikh Sabah's Private Secretary that because of the impasse in Kuwait's mediation in the Yemen dispute, King Faisal was having second thoughts about his visit to Kuwait, at present scheduled for late February. Abdullah Bishara had said that Faisal was taking the line that unless Kuwait could either bring her mediation to a successful conclusion, or break it off, he would not come to Kuwait, lest it be thought that he was yielding to Kuwait's arguments on behalf of Nasser. Abdullah said, however, that Shaikh Sabah was still hoping that he would get Nasser to meet Faisal in Kuwait, and it may be that this idea was put to Nasser when Shaikh Sabah saw him in Cairo.

4. The American Ambassador also told the Ambassador that according to Abdullah Bishara, Nasser told Shaikh Sabah that the Sudanese and Moroccan offers of mediation were unacceptable to him; the former because the Sudanese were committed to the Saudi Arabian point of view, and the latter because the Moroccans were rogues. However, Cottam has also heard from the Moroccan Ambassador that the Moroccan

/Government

M.S.Weir, Esq.,  
Arabian Department,  
Foreign Office.

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END

Government had received a reply from the U.A.R. agreeing to their proposal. This puzzled Cottam, but it seems quite likely that both reports are true and that the Egyptians, while privately disliking the idea of Moroccan mediation, have felt they had to accept it, and trust to the Saudis to turn it down.

5. I am sending copies of this letter to Cranston in Jeddah, and McCarthy in Aden and to the Chanceries in Cairo, Khartoum, Rabat and Washington.

*Yours ever*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J.A.N. Graham'.

(J.A.N. Graham)

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